# News release

## Cray supercomputer arrives at Met Office Exeter

20 June 2003

The first of the Met Office's T3E supercomputer, which is the lynchpin of the Met Office's forecasts, arrives in Exeter today. The arrival of the first of two Cray T3E supercomputers means that the country's weather forecasts will soon be coming from Exeter. Capable of 1,500 billion calculations per second, about 30% of the combined computers' power is used for day-to-day forecasting with the rest used for running long-term climate predictions.

While the Cray delivered today is installed, the Met Office's other T3E is working operationally in Bracknell. The first forecast is planned to come from Exeter in September.

Supercomputers underpin most of the Met Office's work - from more than 60% of the world's aviation forecasts to climate change predictions for the next 100 years. Computers have been used for weather forecasting for more than 40 years but the first supercomputer, a Cyber 205, arrived at the Met Office in 1981. The Met Office has stayed at the leading edge of weather forecasting technology and nowadays three day weather forecasts are as accurate as one day forecasts were back then.

When the second T3E arrived in Bracknell in 1999 the Met Office's headquarters was the most powerful supercomputing site outside of America. But technology is continuously improving and in spring 2004 the Crays are being replaced by an NEC computer.

More about computers at the Met Office

More about the Met Office relocation to Exeter

**Notes**

Some facts about the Cray T3E:

- The computer comprises 640 processing elements (PEs) - component computers that make up the big machine;
- each PE has at least 256Mb of memory, some have 512Mb;
- the total memory is 168Gb;
- the total storage capacity is 1920Gb;
- the total power consumption is 150kW equivalent to over 50 electric kettles;
- the computer weighs 8.5 tons and is liquid cooled.

**For further information:**
Met Office Press Office +44 (0)1392 886655

Met Office Customer Centre 0870 900 0100
If you're outside the UK +44 (0)1392 885680

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